



Creed
Small Group Discussion Resource
Conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary

Once again, as you begin your discussion, read the Apostle's Creed together and then pray that God would give you insight into the phrase - ***Conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary***

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

1. When did you become aware of the doctrine of the Virgin birth? What was your initial reaction? Accepting, skeptical, unsure, sentimental? Do you think Christians really believe this or do you think it is simply a nice story we pretend to believe at Christmas?
2. Read through the Biblical account again and share any impressions you have on these texts.

Matthew 1:18-25

¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about^[d]: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

Luke 1

²⁶ In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

²⁹ Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰ But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.”

³⁴ “How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?”

³⁵ The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. ³⁶ Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. ³⁷ For no word from God will ever fail.”

3. Review these objections to the Virgin Birth. Did any of you have any of these objections before studying this doctrine?

- Just a convenient cover up for a couple of teenagers who got a bit carried away.
- It isn’t scientifically or biologically possible.
- A story borrowed from Greek mythology.
- Just a legend invented by the early church.

4. How many of you have actually studied this doctrine to discern if the virgin birth even really matters? What did your research and theological reflection reveal to you?

5. Review and reflect upon the ideas below and the scriptures supporting these thoughts.

- This doctrine helps us understand the deity of Christ – that he is God.
- This doctrine helps us understand the humanity of Christ – that he is like us.

(John 1, Philippians 2)

- This doctrine helps us understand the sinlessness of Christ – that he is not like us.

(1 Peter 2:22, 1 John 3:5)

- This doctrine is essential for our salvation to be valid.

(Isaiah 53)

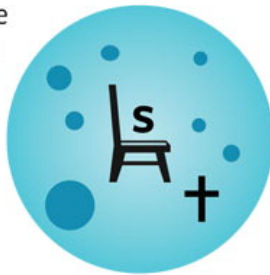
6. As someone said; *if the virgin birth was a myth and if Jesus was just a nice man or great teacher, then there is no good news.* Agree or disagree?

Review of - *I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord*

1. What does the “Lordship of Christ” mean? Reflect on these convicting words of Jesus. “Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say? Luke 6:46
2. If someone was really submitting to the Lordship of Jesus, what would that look like for them in the following areas of their life?
 - Focus
 - Behaviour
 - Mission
 - Values
 - Worship
3. Reflect on these two diagrams by the ministry called - *power to change*. What do you find helpful in these illustrations? What do you find confusing? How does one go about putting Jesus on the throne of their life and keeping him there?

Self-Directed Life

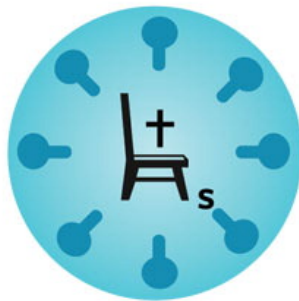
- Legalistic attitude
- Impure thoughts
- Jealousy
- Guilt
- Worry
- Discouragement
- Critical spirit
- Frustration



- Aimlessness
- Fear
- Ignorance of spiritual heritage
- Unbelief
- Disobedience
- Loss of love for God and others
- Poor prayer life
- No desire for Bible Study

Christ-Directed Life

- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Patience
- Kindness
- Goodness
- Faithfulness



- Life is Christ-centered
- Empowered by Holy Spirit
- Introduces others to Christ
- Has effective prayer life
- Understands God’s Word
- Trusts God
- Obeys God

4. Spend some time praying for yourself and for others in your group to really practice the Lordship of Jesus.